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A STEP TO OXFORD:

In which is comprehended

An Impartial Account

OF THE

UNIVERSITY:

With a Pleasant Relation of such Passages as befel the Author in his Journey.

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THE PREFACE.

When a Word is once ſpoken, it is too late to recal.
Quum ſemel emiſſum eſt tunc irrevocabile verbum.

IF I have ſaid more than I ought, I humbly beg the Gentleman's Pardon, and wou'd willingly make a publick Recantation, but if leſs, I hope they will account it a particular Favour done them Perhaps, ſome will ask what neceſſity was there for me to ſay any thing, and wherefore I ſhou'd animadvert upon other Men's Lives and Actions, who probably am guilty of far greater Miſdemeanours. In anſwer to this grand Query, I acknowledge my ſelf a willful Sinner, but the chief and ultimate Deſign of my Animadverſions, was to open the Eyes of the Blind, that they might ſee who were the primary Cauſes of this general Corruption, and to inform the ignorant that 'twere from Perſons in Maſquerade, and Pretenders to Sanctity and Religion, that this National Infection had its Riſe and Origin. I expect this little Treatiſe to undergo a Deluge of ſcurrilous Reflections, little ſcandalous Remarks, with exotick as well as ungenteel Obſervations: I know 'tis a difficult matter to pleaſe every one, but a greater Misfortune to offend all. If I have been ſo happy to oblige a few diſintereſſed and honourable Perſons, I have obtained my end; for
Principibus placuiſſe viris non ultima laus eſt.

I ſhall not go about to Apologize for what I have written, till I am convinced of my Faults and Errors, and whenſoever a reaſonable Proof ſhall be brought againſt me, I'll acknowledge my Offence; for a humble and ſincere Confeſſion to the Generous, is a plenary Satisfaction, Flattery, Inſinuation, and ſordid Complyances, are now a days the Procurers of Favour and Friendſhip; the Practice of this Age too plainly verifies the Old Proverb, Obſequium amicos veritas odium parit. *He that will get Eſteem muſt be every ones humble Servant; and he that is too great to flatter, is accounted a moroſe, ill bred and unſociable Fellow. A Practice of this Nature is ſo incompatible with my Inclinations, ſo contrary to my Diſpoſition, that I cou'd not conform and faſhion my ſelf to it, was I to gain that moſt ineſtimable Reward, the Love of the Univerſity. To avoid Prolixity, He that thinks it worth his time to read this little Pamphlet, is welcome to peruſe it, and he that is of another Opinion, ſhall not be courted to change his Mind.*

JUDG-

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PRELIMINARY

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JUDGING our *London* Atmosphere grosser, more implete and pregnant with infectious and distempering Exhalations than that of the Countrey; and being highly nauseated with the foetid emanations of putrefied Carcasses: I thought it extremely necessary for my own Preservation, to visit the Rural, Flowry, & Delightsome Plains. Having not as yet determin'd which way I should steer my Course, at last I resolv'd for *Oxon:* Out of a great curiosity to satisfie my self concerning the Customs and Regulations of this so Famous University, the Source of all Learning, Seminary of all Morality, Mother of all Piety and Propagator of all Sobriety and Moderation. Accordingly on the 26 of *May*, a Young Gentleman with two Young Ladies and my self took Coach about Seven a Clock in the Morning. I found him by his Deportment to be Adorned with all Manly and Genteel Accomplishments, and reasonably commended by his Discourse that he was somewhat desirous of better acquaintance with you. He told me that himself with the two young Ladies his Sisters were going for *Oxon*; and if I design'd for the same place he should be very glad of my Company, and esteem it as an extraordinary kindness if I would accompany them to take a sight of such places as were most worthy of Observations. I humbly thank'd him for the acceptance of my Company; and protested that if I was any way Qualified to serve the young Ladies and himself, I wou'd certainly wait on them: The Eldest of the Sisters reply'd, that they were mightily oblig'd to me, and being Strangers to the place they were desirous of my company, hoping that I wou'd carry my self no way unlike a Gentleman. With the most profound Gratitude I return'd her thanks for condescending to honour me with so undeserv'd a Favour, as the Enjoyment of such honourable Company; and that having seen the place before, I hop'd my service wou'd not be altogether insignificant. I cou'd not proceed; hesitation and impediment of Speech seised me, I remain'd for a considerable time with my Eyes fix'd and immoveable from this captitaving and Heavenly Object, exactly representing the contemplative State of the Beatifick Vision. Her charming Accents, and irresistible Beauty, had imprinted on me a Passion too predominant to be confronted by the Dictates of unerring Reason. I very sensibly perceiv'd that Love, the most Divine, Angelick and Disinteressed Passion, was become Insuperable; and that I was fall'n into the dismal condition of a despairing Lover. Her Brother saw plainly what confusion I was in, and was extremly impatient to know the reason of my so sudden and violent Discomposure. The young Ladies were likewise very importunate to be inform'd why I was so surprisingly dejected. Having at last somewhat recover'd my self, and being unwilling to assign the true Reason; I told them I was very often in such a deep and thoughtfull Melancholy, especially when I revolv'd on Matters too profound for the Fathom of Human Penetration. The young Gentleman not suspecting the verity of my Allegation, very ingenuously advised me not to revolve on such Mysterious and Unintelligible Objects, since I was apt to be so amazingly confounded. He desir'd me to entertain more sprightly and lively Thoughts, and recommended to me the pleasures of a Poetick Fancy; He represented the happiness of a soaring Muse, and the Divine Inspirations of a Lofty and Sublime Invention. By this time we were come to *Uxbridge* where a Dinner was prepared for us. I had litle or no Stomach to my Victuals, and a less Inclination to Mirth or Pleasure. We had not sate a quarter of an hour after Dinner, before the Coach-man sent Word he was ready to proceed on the Journey; we being likewise unwilling, having twenty Miles to *Oxford*, to tarry any longer, immediatly reenter'd. You may judge with what Uneasiness I spent the time, till

my deplorable Condition was imparted to the young Lady. They endeavour'd by all means imaginable to divert this anxious and Melancholick Diſcompoſure.

But their vigorous Efforts prov'd fruſtraneous. I found the complaint of the deſponding Poet too true.

Hei mihi quòd nullis amor eſt Medicabilis herbis.

There is no preſervative ſufficient to extinguiſh the violent Paſſions of a Soul amorouſly infected; no Remedy ſo Medicinal as to extirpate the Impreſſions and confront the influence of an attractive and beauteous Amorett: But the diſcovery of your Affections to her, that is, to paſs the definitive Sentence of Life or Death on you; muſt expel your fatal Diſeaſe by a favourable Reception of your Addreſſes, or determin your Miſery, by a diſdainful refuſal of them: We were now to my great ſatisfaction come to *Oxford*: Having not as yet reſolv'd on any particular Lodging: I recommended to the young Gentleman the *Angel* in *Broad-ſtreet* which we accordingly took for our Lodgings. Being ſomewhat fatigu'd by our Journy, we order'd our Landlady to get Supper Ready, as ſoon as poſſible; in half an hour it was brought on the Table. I had no extraordinary Appetite, nevertheleſs for Company ſake I did eat ſomewhat, endeavouring to comport my ſelf no way un eaſie or troubleſome. As ſoon as we had Sup'd, the next thing enquir'd after was our Beds, we were told that they were provided for us. The two young Ladies, having taken their leave of us ordered the Maid to ſhow them immediatly to their Chamber. Their Brother and my ſelf after a Glaſs or two followed their example. When we were in Bed after a little Diſcourſe, I deſir'd his name, he granted my requeſt; Withal telling me that he was Born in *London*, his Father formerly a Merchant, who Died a year ſince; and having left him and his Siſters a competent Maintenance, he was reſolv'd to render his Life as pleaſant as poſſible he cou'd.

I applauded his generous Intentions, and humbly entreated his aſſiſtance in a matter which muſt determine me either Bleſs'd or Miſerable; he promiſed to do all that he cou'd for me, conditionally, that my Requeſt was not Diſhonourable. Having obtain'd his promiſe, I thus diſcover'd my ſelf to him. As Honour and Honeſty have ever as yet been eſteem'd and valu'd by me; I ſhall for the future ſo regulate and conform my Actions as that they may never deviate from ſuch Honourable Principles. Theſe are the teſt which diſcriminate a generous Practiſe from Obſequious and Fawning Performances; by Demonſtrating the Noble and Diſintereſſed deſigns of the former; and laying open the mean, baſe and ſordid ends of the latter. To ſpeak ingeniouſly, 'twas your ever Honour'd Siſter which occaſioned my diſorder Yeſterday, 'twas ſhe for whom I cou'd endure the moſt exquiſite torments, for whoſe ſafety I wou'd attempt the moſt inſuperable Difficulties, and depoſit my Life and Fortune to protect her Honour. To be her Vaſſal is prefer'd to the moſt Honourable State of Liberty; and if ſo far Beatified as to obtain reciprocal love, 'tis certainly anticipating of Divine and Heavenly Pleaſures. Here I deſir'd him to pardon the extravagancy of expreſſions, they being the product of a predominant and irreſiſtible Paſſion. Then I gave him an impartial account of my condition, that altho' my Eſtate might not be equivalent to his Siſters Portion, yet in all probability my Profeſſion was ſuch as wou'd advance my Fortune. At firſt he ſeem'd unwilling to Negociate in my behalf, at laſt partly by my Entreaties, and partly by the repeated Proteſtations of my Sincerity, I prevailed on him to recommend me to his adored Siſter. Now thinking it proper to diſturb him any longer, I wiſhed him a good Nights repoſe. All Eaſe and Quietude had quite abandon'd me, and nothing but the Dread of a fatal denyal employ'd my thoughts. After the conſumption of a tedious Night we riſe about Eight a Clock. My honourable Proxy told me he wou'd perform his promiſe, and impart my Condition to his Siſter; I humbly thanked him, certifying, that if ever it lay it my power to Retaliate, he might expect to find me ready to return Satisfaction. During his departure the moſt

fervent

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fervent and zealous Prayers for his Succeſs were utter'd by me, and that the Fates wou'd be ſo propitious as to proſper his endeavours, on which my Happineſs ſo entirely depended. In the ſpace of half an hour he returned; bringing the diſmal tydings of a non Conceſſion, and of a Reſolution ſhe had entertain'd not to change her Condition. He adviſed me to addreſs my ſelf to her, not knowing but that might alter her Sentiments. I approved of his Counſel and after a few Reflections Waited on her. When I came into her Chamber ſhe was Drinking a Diſh of Coffee with her Siſter, they asked me whether I wou'd take a Diſh wieh them; I accepted of their proffer. After we had each of us Drank a Diſh, the youngeſt Siſter carried the remainder to her Brother. I thought this a very proper time to diſcloſe my Intentions, and in this manner I addreſſed my ſelf to her. I a'nt ignorant, Madam, that I don't deſerve ſo great a Favour from you as I now Petition to be granted. The Commands of Love are too prevalent to be withſtood, its Dictates are too deep imprinted to be eraſed: Deſires, when the product of a violent Paſſion, ought to be excus'd, if not granted; Tho' at other times they wou'd be judg'd and condemn'd as immodeſt and unreaſonable. Ocular Demonſtration, Madam, I hope hath ſufficiently evinc'd you of my reality and ſincerity; 'tis you are the only Antidote that can Expel the violence of my Paſſion, You are the only Preſervative to extinguiſh its turbulent and boiſtrous Operations. I muſt expect to be eternally miſerable if out of your inexhauſtible Stock of Mercy you don't extend your Charity and Commiſerate my deplorable State. Altho' I am not poſſeſs'd of the muſt opulent Eſtate; yet my condition, Madam, is ſuch as will allow me a competency, to ſatisfie my own wants, to entertain my Friends tho' not Sumptuouſly yet Moderatly and genteely, and ſometimes to relieve my indigent and neceſſitous Neighbours. Happineſs doth not conſiſt in the abundance of wealth, but in content of Mind. 'Tis not things themſelves but the right Uſe of them renders a happy Life. Perſons Biggotted to filthy Lucre are never ſenſible of the Delights of a ſatisfied Mind. They ſpend their time to encreaſe the Purſe, and the means to accompliſh their unlimited Deſires are the ſole Objects of their Thoughts. They never afford themſelves the Cup of Chearfulneſs nor the Happineſs of a vertuous and pleaſant Converſation. Regard your Languiſhing Captive with a Generous Compaſſion. Let Love, Madam, the moſt rational of all Affections have ſome influence over your Actions; By which Noble Paſſion we participate of the Divine Perfections, and repreſent the Image of our Omnipotent Creator. 'Tis by it we are diſtinguiſhed from the Inferior and Ignoble Beings, and by it we enjoy the raviſhing Pleaſures of a Mollified Soul. Union and inſeparability of Hearts certainly are the moſt Heavenly and Tranſcendent Bliſs; They Annihilate all Contrariety of Diſpoſition, and thwart the Different tendencys of prevailing Humours. Concord and Harmony are the neceſſary Effects of a real and reciprocal Love. I wou'd have proceeded had ſhe not with a ſmiling interruption prevented me. She told me that my Paſſionate Expreſſions were ſufficient to Conquer Hearts leſs Fortified than her own; that the prevalency of my Arguments wou'd have Conquer'd any one if not guarded and protected with an immovable Reſolution to the contrary. She adviſed me to obliterate and cancel my Paſſion, and certified that all my endeavours wou'd prove fruſtraneous that were concerted to obtain my propoſed end; That 'twas in vain for me to continue my Addreſſes, ſhe being reſolutely determin'd not to violate her promiſe; 'twere not Riches, and Honour were the Impediments to the enjoyment of what I ſo much deſired; but her unalterable Vow never to change condition. This unexpected return threw me into the Black and diſmal State of Deſpair; Nothing but amazing and horrible Scenes appeared, and the thoughts of my future miſery precipitated me into confuſion and dejecting Melancholy. Before I cou'd beg pardon for my boldneſs, and conjure her to take pity upon a miſerable Wretch, her Brother and Siſter came to us. The Weather being

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being mighty Clear and Serene they were very earnest to refresh themselves with a Pleasant Walk. I tender'd my service, and promis'd to show them the finest Walk as 'tis reported in the whole Kingdom. They told me 'twou'd be esteem'd no small Favour, if I wou'd oblige them with my Company; I granted their Request, and accordingly show'd them to *Mandlin-walks*. The young Gentleman said that he thought they were adorn'd with all things requisite to render them extremely Delightsome. He protested that he never saw more exact position and order of Trees Rivetted thro'out the whole Walk. That he never beheld a more Verdant and Flowry Meadow; he extoll'd the contrivance of the Ground, its easy Ascents and Degradations, its Smoothness, its well Proportion'd Latitude and Moderate Length. The Pleasure occasion'd by the Murmuring noise of the Adjacent River he thought extremely Ravishing, and Delightsome. To see the Fishes Besporting themselves in their proper Element, Decoy'd and Caught by the vigilant and dextrous Angler was accounted by him pleasant Interruptions and Diverting delays in Walking. Having Recreated our selves, we return'd to our Lodgings; Dinner was immediatly brought to Table, as soon we had Din'd, we went to see the *Theatre*, and *Laboratory*. There were a vast number of Rarities worthy of Observation; of which you might expect a particular Account, did not brevity of time prevent me. Having spent the Day to satisfie my Companys Curiosity, I thought it necessary for my own Refreshment to revive my Drooping Spirit with an enlivening Bottle. I ask'd the young Gentleman to go with me, who very willingly accepted my offer; We went to the *King's-head*, were the Wine was so intolerably Sophisticated that we were constrain'd to depart sooner than we first design'd. Ale is the Prime Commodity that is here afforded; 'tis in it our Gownsmen liquidate their Coin; 'Tis on the Account of this Divine and inspiring Liquid, that they arrive to that Elevated Pitch of Honour, as to render their Names worthy the Dignified Character of *Creta Notanda*. Finding it apparently impossible to prevail on the young Lady to alter her Resolution; Nevertheless for satisfaction sake I determined to try the Energy of a Rhyming Faculty: Accordingly I commenc'd Versifyer hoping that my indigested Poem, because the product of an unfeigned Passion, wou'd have some influence in this Amorous Negotiation. 'Twere not my own inclinations, but the Assertion of the Poet forc'd me to it.

Omnia Vincit Amor & nos cedamus Amori.

Not knowing which way to convey the Verses to her, and desir'd her Brother to deliver them, who was so kind to carry the following Lines for me.

The Symptons of desponding Love I find,
Now seizing on my Immaterial Mind.
Sighs, Groans and Tears the consequence of Grief,
Portend destruction 'ifts witheld relief
Immortal Gods your aid I do implore,
Ye Goddesses whom I so much adore;
Preserve and keep me from this fatal stroke,
And let her Pride and high Disdain be broke;
Her joys Triumphant over Conquer'd Hearts
Transmuted into Malady, and smarts.
What State of Happiness shou'd I enjoy
Was she more tender, mollified, less coy?
Cupid *attend and with thy Poisnous Dart,*
Infect and penetrate her hard'ned Heart.
Imprint the Divine Passion on her Soul,
Which will perverse and ill Nature controul.
Let Love Angelick all her actions move,
And in desponding Passion let her rove.

Let

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Let Groves and Grottoes be her chief delight;
In Shady Glooms let her conſume the Night.
Let her to Woods her diſmal fate proclaim.
Where Eccho ſhall repeat the doleful ſtrain,
And by reſounding notes Enhanſe her pain.
How will ſhe then her priſtin pride condemn,
And for the future never more contemn,
Her Slaves and Vaſſals.
How will ſhe then with promptitude comply,
To what I ſhall Command and what deny.
In Extaſys of Love, in Bliſs Divine
We ſhall conſume and ſpend the fleeting time;
In Scenes of Pleaſure and Seraphick joy
We ſhall our ſelves in vacant hours employ.
We will not on our former ſtate revolve,
But anxious cares Alternately diſſolve.
In ſweet Embraces.
Nothing ſhall diſunite or e'er impair,
The Bliſful ſtate of ſo conjoyn'd a pair,
Excepting Death whoſe force we can't withſtand
But muſt obey his Dread and great Command.

The next Morning deſigning to wait on one of my Acquaintance a Member of *Devon.* Coll. having receiv'd ſo many unmerited kindneſſes from the young Gentleman, I thought my ſelf oblig'd to deſire his Company. He was very ready to go with me, after I had inform'd him who he was that I was about to viſit, and that his Company was Mighty Diverting, not any way Ridiculous, but rather Learnedly Pleaſant. We went to his Chamber, where we found him Reading a Metaphyſical Syſtem. He receiv'd us with all Imaginable Reſpect and Civility. We deſir'd him to excuſe us from tarrying at preſent, and that he wou'd Favour us with his Company over the Parks. We prevail'd on him for our Departure, upon promiſe to Dine with him before we return'd. In our Walk I asked his Opinion of that Abſtracted Science which we found him Reading, whether he thought it Pleaſant or Profitable. He ſmil'd at my Quæry, and ſaid that he Judged it one of the moſt neceſſary Parts of Learning; that he cou'd not Apprehend how any one cou'd form a Right Notion of the Infinite Being, without Adulterating their Conception with the Groſs Affections of Corporeity and Materiality: Who had never Improv'd and Refin'd their Thoughts with the Divine Learning of Abſtraction. He cou'd not Conceive what Indigeſted, Obſcure and Confus'd Ideas Perſons muſt entertain of Univerſals, whoſe Notions of Singulars are *Inadæquate* and Imperfect. He was certain their Apprehenſions were entirely Dependant on Imagination, and to Conceive Immateriality was more difficult for them, than to Explore an Occult Quality. It being near Dinner time we return'd to our Lodgings, where having Din'd, in order to Divert the young Ladies, I deſir'd him to give us a Particular Account of their College, of the Government, the Manner of Elections, the Qualifications requir'd for the Attainment of a Fellowſhip, the Annuity, Duration, whether Limitation of Years or for Life, for what Offences Deprivation of *Officii & Beneficii* was Inflicted; the Officers Preſiding in Exerciſe, the Nature of Exerciſe, the Office of a Tutour, their Puniſhments for Irregularities and Violation of the Orders of the Houſe, the manner of Eating and Drinking, and time of Prayer. He told me my Requeſt was very difficult to be exactly Fulfil'd, notwithſtanding he wou'd in ſome meaſure endeavour to ſatisfie us. Our College is Govern'd by a Body Aggregate, out of which for Order ſake and for the Avoidance of Fifth Monarchical and Levelling

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Principles, there is one by the Conſents of the Fraternity to be their Head and Superiour. He ought to be a Perſon of Probity, Learning and Conduct; One that is not to be Byaſſ'd or ſway'd by Intereſt or Subornation; Juſt and Honeſt in Life and Converſation, a true and Faithful Judge of all Matters and Controverſies Cognizable within the Precincts and Verge of his Juriſdiction, Impartial and Unprejudiced in the Diſtribution of Rewards, and Puniſhments. No Money given to the College ſhou'd exempt one from a Penalty, which on another Guilty of the ſame Miſdemeanour ſhou'd be Inflicted. He ought to ſee that the Fellows Perform their Exerciſe as is requir'd by the Statutes. That Regularity and Order be kept amongſt the Members of his Recluſe Society. He ought not to keep ſuch Servants as may give the College occaſion to ſuſpect his Continency. 'Tis his Duty to Reform and Correct ſuch Fellows as are given and Addicted to Ebriety, Gaming, luſt of the Fleſh, Gluttony, Hypocriſie, Idleneſs, and Lying, not only to Extirpate ſuch Abuſes when crept in, but he ſhou'd with an inceſſant care and vigilance endeavour to prevent the Cauſes of them. As the keeping too ſtrong and Humming Ale and Stingoe, Tables and Packs of Cards in the College; too handſome Bedmakers and Laundreſſes, allowing a greater quantity of Meat to a Fellow than to any other Member for the ſame Price. Encouraging Pretenders to Sanctity and Piety when the Ultimate end of their Maſqueraded Holineſs, is to procure a Fellowſhip, get Pupils, obtain a Parſonage or ſome worldly Lucre. Cabals in the Common Room in Studying Hours, Treating of Acquaintance and the like. To avoid the moſt deteſtable Vice of Lying, in the firſt place, the Rector muſt be free from it himſelf, that he may, as in all other Caſes ſo particularly in this, ſhow a good example to thoſe committed to his Charge. He muſt Reprove, Rebuke and Diſcountenance all Informers ſuſpected of any prejudice againſt the Informed, all Tale Bearers furmiſed to be guilty of Diſſimulation or Counterfeits. Having ſhown us the Nature of the Government, he Proceeded to the manner of Elections. Doubtleſs the Primitive Deſigns and Inſtitution of all Foundations, were for the Promotion and Propagation of Morality, Learning and Religion, and for the Maintenance of Perſons as were Qualified by their Education for ſuch Preferment. In former Day's there were no ſuch Indirect and Clandeſtin Practiſes in Elections, Preſentations and Diſpoſitions of Places. Juſtice and Equity were more ſtrictly Obſerv'd, and greater Veneration was thought due to their Pious and Charitable Founders, that ſo Ungratefuly to pervert the Noble and Divine End they propoſed to themſelves by ſuch Endowments, by making them the Cauſes of Bribery and Corruption. 'Tis of late that ſuch a Deluge of Subornation hath Overwhelm'd the World. I beleive our Founders intent was, that ſuch Children as were Bred up at School, till they were fit for the Univerſity, ſhou'd be maintain'd by his Fundation, their Parents being not able to give them a competent Allowance provided they were Qualified for ſuch Preferment, as of the ſame County to which the Fellowſhip is Allotted. Of ſufficient Learning, of an untainted Character, and of a Competent ſtanding. Two of which Qualifications to the great diſcouragement of Literature and Morality is too much neglected and undervalu'd. Merit like Honeſty is practiſed and Grows Cold. He that will give much Money ſhall be ſure to win the Fellowſhip, and he that will give none ſhall be as ſure to go without it. Baſe and Mercenary Animals that will forfeit their Gratitude and Probity for a little Duſty-pelf. Maugre theſe ſordid and diſhoneſt Practiſes, they muſt ſtill paſs for Men of Conſcience and Religion. For ſatisfaction we will ſee how this Indirectneſs can be conſonant and agreeable to theſe Divine Principles. *Simony* I ſuppoſe is exploded as a Sinful and Sacrilegious Act, highly conducive to the Clergy's Empoveriſhment as well as Derogatory to their Divine Function. What *Simony* is continues a Controverted Point, ſome have Stinted its Signification to Buying or Selling of Benefices: Others more Rightly have extended its Purport

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to all Dishoneſt, Baſe, and Indirect Dealings, and Bargains for any Eccleſiaſtical Living whatſoever. Fellowſhips, I muſt confeſs, are not, ſimply and ſtrictly taken, Spiritual endowments, becauſe Perſons of different Profeſſions, (as Phiſicians and Civil Lawyers) may enjoy the ſame. Nevertheleſs becauſe the Maintenance of a great number of the Clergy depends entirely on them, and few beſides enjoy the ſame, the Buying and Selling of ſuch Livings ſeems to carry with it a Tincture of *Simonical* Contract. But Granting it to be no *Simony* how is it according to Conſcience and Religion to violate the Law; eſpecially in a point which ſo immediately tends to the ſuppreſſion of Diſhoneſty and Corruption. I ſend my Son to the Univerſity, who when of ſufficient ſtanding appears for a Fellowſhip, he has a Competition, I am well certified that my Boy is a far better Scholar than the other by indifferent Perſons, perhaps acknowledg'd ſo to be by his Chiefeſt Oppoſers: Nothing can be objected againſt him as to his Manners and Life. Nevertheleſs the other by his Bribes Wins the Fellowſhip from him: certainly this is no ſmall Diſcouragement to my ſelf and others to ſend their Children to a place where Vertue and Merit is ſo Slighted and Diſeſteem'd. They condemn the Principles of *Machiavel* as Impious and Erroneous, Striking at the Fundamentals of all Religion, Deſtructive of Honeſty and Fidelity. If Mens actions are the beſt Informers what they are, I am well certified they are Biggotted Followers of his Doctrine, their Lives too plainly Demonſtrate that the Shew not the Practiſe of Religion is profitable. We can Preach a Sermon againſt ſetting our minds to much on the things of this World, when we ourſelves make them the ſole Objects of all our Actions. Money Commands all things, and he that won't bid Religion farewel, when it confronts Intereſt is Accounted a Superſtitious Fool. Monſtrous Impiety! Accompany'd with the Aggravating Circumſtance of Hypocriſie.

The Qualifications requiſite for the Attainment of a Fellowſhip are theſe. He ought to be well Learnt in Claſſicks and Philoſophy. For before the Election which is Annual, he ſhould be examined Strictly in both theſe Parts of Learning; and, if found inſufficient in either, denied the Privelege of Standing. He ought to be one of an unſpotted Character, leading a Life conformable to the Regulations and Statutes of the College. Theſe Accompliſhments now are become Unfaſhionable, Fifty Pounds to a Building is prefer'd to all deſert. The other particulars I deſir'd to be inform'd of he told me wou'd require ſo much time, that to begin a recital of them wou'd be to no purpoſe. Finding him unwilling to proceed, I Requeſted, having heard that every College was Noted for ſome particular part of Learning, to know in what Art or Science theirs exceeded. He told the report was Egregiouſly falſe; and that they were ſo ſtrict followers of Vertue, as to avoid all extremitys and exceſs; Amongſt them a Perſon extraordinary Learned was Diſteem'd as one Immoderatly Stupid. They kept a Medium in every thing, and judged an Elevated Degree of Learning little better than Intenſity of Folly: He confeſſed in former Days their Honourable Members were of other Sentiments, of which diverſity an Old Gentleman now amongſt them was an Undeniable proof; He was won't to have the Honour to be carried in Triumph for his Nice, Penetrating and Diſcriminative Faculty. When Sophiſtry and nicety of Argument was in Vogue he appeared the moſt Eminent Proficient, in Scholaſtick Conflicts he was Inſuperable, in Cavil and Argumentation always Victorious. Notwithſtanding theſe Accumulated *Honours* he had now alter'd his Opinion, and prefers an half a Gooſe with a Plum Pudding for his Dinner, to the unprofitable exerciſe of Bantering Quibles and Academical Diſtinctions.

He was inform'd not long ſince that the *Heretical* Weeds of *Calviniſm* was crept in amongſt them, but where or in what Soil was uncertain, he hop'd not in them whoſe Office it is to initiate others in the Right Path. *He* begau

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now to excuſe the Prolixity and Imperfection of his Relation. We certify'd him that it wanted no Apology, and that we were mightily oblig'd for his Information; and if he wou'd give us a Tranſitory and ſhort Deſcription of the other Colleges, 'twou'd be eſteem'd a particular favour. He promiſed to ſatisfie our Curioſity as well as he cou'd, and accordingly gave us the following Accounts.

C. C. C. Is a very Spacious and Ample College has got a very Honourable *Dean* who is thought an Accompliſht Courtier. This worthy Patriot had the misfortune to incur a Publick Cenſure for a Ridiculous Picture which he plac'd over our *Oxford* Almanack. Had I the happineſs to be acquainted with this honeſt Gentleman, I ſhou'd perſwade him to abſtain from manifeſting a Diſloyalty and Diſaffection in Effigie, which he dares not own by an Undaunted Confeſſion, and is afraid to defend by a generous Vindication. There are a great many Ingenious Men in this Society, who to ſhew ineffable diſgrace too plainly verify the Old Proverb.

Wad. C. is no leſs famed for Liquour than Learning; here 'tis at your option to be Sot or Scholar, Pot and Book are both Exerciſed, and *Utrum horum mavis accipe* is at your choice to determin. Here are Perſons Conſpicuous for all ſorts of Literature, Logick, Natural Philoſophy, Ethicks (I Mean the Theorick Part,) Metaphyſicks, Mathematicks, Theology, ſome ſay Socinianiſm, and that *Lock* is Accounted their Grand Evangeliſt, his Chap. of Identity and Diverſity, Matter of Faith and Revelation.

Mag. C. this is a very Noble Foundation, it has got a Headſhip ſufficient to extend a ſtrict Lac'd Conſcience to ſwallow an Oath, which otherwiſe for fear of a Conſcientious Pungency it woud not do. Here reſides honeſt *Daniel de Fo's* Eccleſiaſtick Drummer, Famous for Lenity and Good Manners, a great Stickler for the Bill of Toleration; a mighty oppoſer of the Act *de Hær. Comburr.* a great Promoter of Uniformity and Concord. He treats his Superiours in the moſt obliging and complimental Terms, Writes without Acrimony and Scurrility. His Anſwer to the Character of a true Churchman is a Demonſtrative *Manifeſto* of his genteel Stile: Indeed the B. of *Wor.* is extremely obliged for his kind and generous treatment, that he contented himſelf with a verbal attachment of his Character, and did not proceed to invade and Buffet his Perſon, as he did not long before one of his Collegiats. That your Notion of this Clergy Heroe, may be diſtinct and *Adæquate* take *de Foe's* Ingenious Character of Boanerges.

Hark Satyr, now bring Boanerges down
A Fighting Prieſt, a Bully of the Gown,
In double Office he can ſerve the Lord,
To Fight his Battles and to Preach his Word,
A double Merit is to his Office due
He thumps the Pulpit, and the People too.

B. C. is Fam'd for its Profound Sage and Rabbi, the Head, who has not only div'd into the moſt Abſtruſe Parts of Divinity, but has likewiſe employ'd himſelf in the more Requeſted Study of Oratory, and Elocution. His expreſſions are always Elegantly Significant, and generaly contain ſome grand point of Learning. There happen'd a Controverted point in the Convocation which was to be determined by the Suffrages of the Regent Maſters. It proceeded with Heat and Paſſion, and one giving his Vote contray to the Inclinations of the Honoured Vic. Chanc. our Infallible Oracle. In a Tranſcendent Rage and Fury he Vociferated this Enthuſiaſtick, Ænigmatical and Unintelligible Rapture, *Tuum Suffragium non Stabit.* Certainly were the Members of this Ancient Fundation æquipollent to their Mr. in Knowledge and Penetration,

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tion, we might Rationally expect an Infallible College as well as an Infallible Pontif.

Lin. Coll. Your Merry and Jocose Fellows will give you the Character of this Col. from the Image which stands on the Front of it; They compare this Society to the *Indians* who Worship and Adore the Devil that he may not hurt and endamage them. Others more grave and serious will inform you, that they keep Satan always in view to deter their Members from falling into Vice and Wickedness. I shall not trouble my self to examine the verity of these Opinions, but leave the Inquisition to those who are better acquainted with the Gentlemen.

Pet. C. Of this Body Politick, I can't say any thing; being prevented from all Commerce and Correspondence with them, for fear of that tormenting and Nauseous Infection, call'd the Pruriginous Disease; a sufficient Bar to all Intercourse.

G. J. C. Is remarkable for a great many Excellencys, a pleasant Scituation, fine Walks, a Shady and Cooling Grove; Extraordinary and Sumptuous Diet, its Unlimited credit and trust; Its Corpulent Dr. its Generous and Bountiful Head; and every thing except Learning; a great misfortune that a Foundation arriv'd to such a height of Perfection shou'd want the Finishing Stroke.

N. C. Astrology Shines here in its Meridian; Heavenly and Abstruse Phænomena, Inscrutinable Arcana are expos'd and Manifested by Infallible Almanacks. The Countryman is here Taught when to Plant and Inoculate, when to Plough and when to Reap. You are told when *London* was Founded, and when *Oxford* was made a Place of Habitation. What you must Pay the Carrier for a Pacquet, and what for a Box of greater Weight. Here is discover'd when 'twill Rain, Snow, and when 'twill be Dry Weather; In short you are told when you must do every thing, excepting when you must Pay your Debts. Wonderful Discoverys, Strange Prognostications, and Eternal Veritys.

P. C. Here are whole Shoals of Low, Moderate, Groveling and Whiggish Churchmen, a Gang of Demiphanatical Blockheads that han't the Sense to sute their Religion with their Interest. This House hath got a particular Statute worthy of Observation, which requires that their Foundation Men be well Born, well Habited, but not too much Learn'd, for fear that one knowing more than the rest, shou'd Deride and Ridicule the Ignorance of his Brethren. Long Winded Sermons are very much in vogue here: He that can Preach two hours and a half, tho not a Word of Sense all the time, is Accounted a topping Fellow. Being Unacquainted with the other Colleges he Silently past them over. The Halls were Diminutive Bodys, in quantity not quality Distinguish'd from the former. They as exactly follow their example as a Drunken Pupil doth his Tutour. Here he desir'd our Patience while he made the following Reflections, on what had been already said.

The University is like a Fountain, which when once Corrupted its Branches can never remain Untainted; When the Academy is Sophisticated, Inferiour Schools of Discipline and Learning must necessarily be infected. As the Fountain Disperseth its Springs and Rivolets every where, so doth the University Diffuse its Learning throughout the Kingdom, and the more extensive the Diffusion is, the more Universal and Epidemick must the Corruption be; if ever we will expect to have a Learned and Vertuous Nation, our Academy must not be Immoral and Illiterate. Vicious Principles are easily Imbibed but not with the like facility to be Extirpated. We have a Natural Inclination to Vice and Depravity; Our Souls are susceptible of all Impressions, sensible of the least Operation on them. In our Infancy they are like Softened Wax Receptive of all Stamps and Figures, they resemble a Sheet of White and Unsully'd Paper, which is capable of the finest Characters, or Blots and Blurs; In this

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State of Life we Promiscuously receive Pure or True, False or Corrupted Notions. The Rectitude and Deformity of our future Actions entirely depend on our Education; If we are Initiated at our first arrival to Years of Maturity in the Right and Unerring Paths of Vertue, we shall spend the remainder of our Lives in the same Delectable way. On the contrary, if a Vicious Course be Represented to us, either by Insinuation or Practise as the most eligible and pleasant Life, we shall lead the Remaining part of our Days Compatible and Correspondent to it. The thought of this National Degeneracy which must necessarily Ensue from a University Corruption. I could wish wou'd have so great an Influence over our Academicks, as to occasion a General Reformation and Amendment of their Manners. His whole Relation was very Diverting, the handsomness of his Expressions highly admir'd, his Methodical proof throughout the whole Recital, by a Numerous Concurrence of probable and convincing Circumstances, was thought the product of an improved Judgment.

Having tarried a Week we began to consider of our return, at last a Day was appointed, and according to the Appointment we took Coach. We Din'd at *Uxbridge*, and came to *London* about six a Clock.

The young Gentleman by his Importunity Prevailed on me to take up my Lodgings at his House. All Respect and Civility was shown me, and by the Intercession of the Brother, the young Lady carried herself very obliging towards me. At all opportunities I Reiterated my Address to her with Repeated Protestations of my sincerity.

In a short time my Proposals met with a kind Reception, my Condition was Strangely alter'd, Despair and Melancholy was Transmuted into the Pleasant Expectation of Future Bliss. All Secular Pleasures at present I enjoy, and nothing remains to compleat my Happness, but the Consummation of the Matrimonial Rites.

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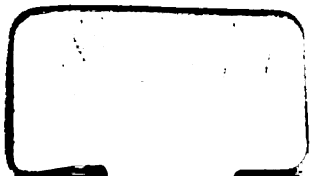

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